

<p align="center">STATE OF VERMONT</p> <p align="center">AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES</p> <p align="center">DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p>	<p>Title:</p> <p align="center">Volunteer Services and Management</p>	<p align="right">Page 1 of 7</p>
<p>Chapter:</p> <p align="center">Volunteer Services</p>	<p align="center"># 376</p>	<p>Supersedes</p> <p>#376 dated 05/02/1996</p> <p>#376.01 dated 11/06/2000</p> <p>#379 dated 12/14/1981</p>
<p>Attachments, Forms & Companion Documents:</p> <p>All attachments, forms, and companion documents are available on the Department of Correction's webpage.</p>		
<p>Local Procedure(s) Required: Yes - for establishment of written facility rules only and safekeeping of CI statements and DR recordings. (See Section 11 also.)</p> <p>Applicability: All staff (including contractors and volunteers)</p> <p>Security Level: "B" – Anyone may have access to this document.</p>		

PURPOSE

This directive serves to provide the Department of Corrections' (DOC) guiding principles and core beliefs as they relate to the use and management of volunteers who work with offenders and inmates. The directive provides the core beliefs as well as implementation methods to ensure volunteer services run securely, safely, and effectively within the framework of the DOC.

POLICY

The DOC believes that community participation and support is essential for the successful delivery of correctional services. The organized effort that incorporates the community into all services and programs is the Volunteer Services Program.

The use of volunteer services is an integral part of the community corrections philosophy. The presence of volunteers demonstrates a shared responsibility between the community, the offender, and DOC.

Volunteers will be treated as correctional professionals consistent with DOC's administrative rules, directives, and interim memos. Volunteers will be integrated into operations at all sites. Upon final approval and registration, registered volunteers will be considered DOC personnel under DOC administrative rules, directives, and interim memos, unless specifically stated otherwise.

DOC values volunteers for the following reasons:

- a. Volunteers offer a wide variety of services to both offenders and staff that otherwise would not be available.
- b. Volunteers can introduce offenders to new people, interest, and positive life styles.
- c. Volunteers can offer important community perspectives to correctional programs in reviewing regulations, procedures, and methods of delivery.

- d. Volunteers increase public awareness and understanding, and, therefore, involvement in corrections.
- e. Volunteers are an important resource which can be integrated into overall treatment goals for offenders and thus serve DOC goals. They are valuable links to community and agency resources to assist offenders in successful rehabilitation.
- f. Volunteers expand and enrich the resources of staff.
- g. Volunteers provide encouragement and support to offenders for change.
- h. Volunteers provide the opportunity to implement restorative justice for the offender and the community.

The DOC encourages community members to be involved as volunteers. Volunteers can serve in a variety of roles with both offenders and staff in helping the DOC fulfill its vision, mission, values, and principles. Volunteers shall lead activities which adhere to evidence based practices using risk, need, and responsivity principles to address offender's criminogenic needs.

AUTHORITY

3 V.S.A., §3052. 28 V.S.A. § 102(b)(2)..

REFERENCE

3 V.S.A, § 1101; 12 V.S.A., Chapter 189; 21 V.S.A. § 601(12)(A); DOC Administrative Directives # 380.01; 415; Agency of Human Services Rule 08-48; Agency of Human Services Policy 4.02.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

1. Volunteer Roles and Categories of Service

- a. Volunteers can be assigned to a variety of roles within the DOC. DOC managers will be responsible for developing a process that ensures that volunteers are placed in roles that meet DOC needs and those of volunteer groups and/or individuals.
- b. The DOC prioritizes need for services according to overall program goals established centrally. Volunteer roles have been developed within both the risk management track and court and reparative track for services in the facilities and field sites.
- c. Within these tracks, volunteers are needed, but not limited to providing services in five major areas to support DOC program goals in both facility and field sites. Those five major areas include, but are not limited to, education, leisure skills, substance abuse, restorative justice, and staff supportive services. They also provide religious programs and can provide other activates as determined by the individual sites as needed.

2. Status of Volunteers

- a. Volunteers must follow the DOC's administrative directives, interim memos, and rules. Volunteers will not be allowed into facilities or work with offenders until successfully completing a background check, interview, training.¹
- b. Volunteer interaction with offenders must always be directly related to the volunteer role that the volunteer is approved to conduct. Volunteers shall not meet an inmate during any normal facility visiting time unless approved in writing by the Facility Superintendent.

3. Planning of Volunteer Services

- a. The Volunteer Services Coordinators (VSC) have primary responsibility for volunteer services and assist other DOC staff in planning, recruiting, screening, supervising, evaluating, and managing correctional volunteer programs at their respective sites.
- b. A volunteer program planning process will be established at each site that identifies and prioritizes needed services to comply with risk reduction programming, offender case plan needs, and compliance with DOC Administrative Directive #380.01 *Religious Services*.
- c. Individual work sites can identify specific roles to meet their needs in addition to the program planning process.
- d. A current schedule of volunteer services will be available to all inmates and posted in appropriate places in all facilities; for example, on unit bulletin boards, facility bulletin boards, facility close circuit TV, library, and other common areas inmates access.

4. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- a. Volunteer Services Coordinators
 - i. Ensure that each DOC volunteer receives and signs a receipt for the Volunteer Handbook.
 - ii. Ensures that the receipt will be in duplicate and will be signed by the volunteer and witnessed.
 - iii. Place the original receipt in the volunteer's file.
 - iv. Ensure that the duplicate receipt is given to the volunteer.
- b. Volunteer
 - i. Reading and familiarizing themselves with the Volunteer Handbook.
 - ii. Reading and familiarizing themselves with the DOC administrative rules, directives, and interim memos.

¹ A background check includes a reference check and a criminal history check which may include, but is not limited to, a search of the volunteer's name through various criminal information databases, and a fingerprint check.

5. Recruitment of Volunteers

- a. The State's personnel policies and practices prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, place of birth, age, or physical or mental condition (a person with qualifying disability).
- b. It is the responsibility of the volunteer services staff to coordinate and support recruitment efforts by other staff, as well as conduct ongoing recruitment efforts to meet the goals established in the planning process.

6. Qualifications for Volunteer Services

- a. Anyone may apply for a volunteer position within the DOC. Acceptance of an application will be determined through a screening process that shall include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Completion of a Volunteer Application Form;
 - ii. Acceptance and signature of the DOC Work Rules;
 - iii. Acceptance and signature of the Confidentiality Agreement;
 - iv. A background check which includes a criminal history check and a reference check;
 - v. A satisfactory interview or assessment; and
 - vi. The need for the service the volunteer plans to offer.

7. Interview

- a. There will always be an interview and review of a job description between the supervising staff member and potential volunteer. The purpose of this interview is to ensure the appropriateness and ability of the volunteer to meet the job requirements. If this interview does not result in approval, the volunteer will be informed in writing that his or her application has not been accepted.

8. Criteria for Volunteer Services

- a. Volunteers must complete orientation and training by the VSC and/or other appropriate staff.
- b. In order to maintain status as an active volunteer, a person needs to have volunteered a minimum of six (6) hours in the past year.
- c. Volunteers who have not been active for more than one (1) year will be required to reapply and attend another volunteer training.
- d. Persons under the age of 18 years will not be permitted to serve as volunteers without written permission of the Superintendent or District Manager, VSC, and their parent/guardian.
- e. Professionals such as physicians, nurses, psychologists (or other mental health professionals), and lawyers may contribute their professional expertise on a volunteer basis. When services in a professional capacity are licensed or regulated by state law, they must submit evidence of proper and current registration which must be verified prior to placement. Regardless of

1 licensing arrangement, volunteer professionals will participate in departmental training related
2 to the topic area in which they volunteer.

- 3 f. Clergy or lay clergy volunteers providing religious programming or providing regular or
4 frequent religious services will become registered volunteers.²
- 5 g. Government-subsidized volunteers are considered volunteers and supervised by a staff person
6 in the area in which they perform the service.
- 7 h. An intern is considered a volunteer and is screened, trained, and supervised as other
8 volunteers.
- 9 i. In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, DOC employees may only volunteer when
10 the voluntary activity is substantially different from their job assignments. All such volunteer
11 activities must be approved by the local site manager.
- 12 j. An ex-offender may be considered for volunteer service within a facility or field office one
13 (1) year following completion of sentence, and there is evidence that they are a productive
14 member of society. Ex-offenders must have written approval from the Superintendent or
15 District Manager. An ex-offender must submit three (3) letters of recommendation.
- 16 k. In addition to the requirements prescribed above, an ex-offender who wishes to be considered
17 for volunteer service within a facility or field site that has convictions of crimes which are
18 sexual in nature must appeal to the Commissioner of Corrections. The following procedure
19 outlines the requirements for approving such a request:
- 20 i. An ex-offender who seeks to be considered for volunteer service within a facility or field
21 site must fill out the Ex-Offender Volunteer Services Application and provide any
22 additional information deemed necessary. The Ex-Offender Volunteer Service
23 Application must be approved by the relevant District Manager/Superintendent, followed
24 by the Director of Facilities/Director of Field Sites, and the Commissioner of DOC in
25 order to be granted. All applications will be approved on a case-by-case basis. In order to
26 be approved, the following must be found:
- 27 1) The individual does not pose a safety threat³,
- 28 2) The individual is important to the success of a specialized offender rehabilitative
29 program, and
- 30 3) The individual will not have contact with inmates without staff supervision.
- 31 l. Parolees and probationers may be considered for volunteer service prior to the one-year
32 waiting period. Exceptions to this policy will be made on a case-by-case basis. Applicants
33 must demonstrate stability and productivity and be recommended by the Probation and Parole
34 Officer supervising them.
- 35

² This directive incorporates the principles, policies, and procedures identified in DOC Administrative Directive #380.01 *Religious Observances*.

³ Determination of whether or not a person poses a safety threat shall consider the following factors, (1) length of time that has passed since the activity; (2) evidence of rehabilitation on the part of the individual; (3) other relevant factors and rationale leading to the safety threat determination.

1 **9. Denial of Application**

- 2 a. When a volunteer application is not approved, the VSC will provide written notification of the
3 reason for denial to the applicant and all other VSCs.

4 **10. Volunteer Job Descriptions**

- 5 a. A volunteer's job description must be completed prior to the volunteer providing services.
6 This document will describe the service(s) to be provided, length of service/schedule, any
7 training needs of the volunteer, and the name of the supervisor for the volunteer.
8

9 **11. Volunteer Identification**

- 10 a. The VSC will issues each registered facility volunteer a photo identification card, which must
11 be carried by the volunteer while on official business
12 b. Upon termination or resignation from the DOC, the identification card will be turned in to
13 Department staff and destroyed by the VSC.

14 **10. Training**

- 15 a. All registered volunteers will complete orientation and training prior to beginning service and
16 every two years thereafter. Volunteers who have been inactive for more than one year will be
17 required to repeat the basic orientation. Specific site training will also be required.
18 b. Orientation will provide general information about the DOC, volunteer responsibilities, and
19 departmental obligation to volunteers. This will include, but not be limited to, legal issues,
20 liability issues, departmental mission and goals, restorative justice, risk reduction programs,
21 the Prison Rape Elimination Act, and security. Orientation will be delivered by the VSC, but
22 other staff may be involved as appropriate.
23 c. A Volunteer Services Manual shall be kept current and made available to all volunteers by the
24 volunteer services staff to reinforce training.
25 d. Site-specific training must be completed to address topics particular to the worksite. This
26 training will include, but not be limited to, security procedures, office procedures, correctional
27 staff job duties, and other site expectations. Site-specific training manual will be developed
28 and delivered by the VSC and other appropriate staff.
29 e. Additional training will be provided, when applicable, to prepare volunteers for specific job
30 duties. Additional training may be required to address changes in DOC's policy or law.
31 f. Staff Training
32 i. The volunteer services staff, in cooperation with local DOC training coordinators, will
33 develop and regularly administer training for DOC's staff about volunteers and their roles.
34 ii. Staff to be trained include, but is not limited to superintendents, district managers,
35 casework supervisors, facility caseworkers, probation and parole officers, correctional
36 officers, security and operations supervisors, and other staff who may supervise
37 volunteers; such as education staff, recreation coordinators, and administrative staff.

38 **11. Supervision and Evaluation**

- 39 a. Once an individual has been approved for volunteer service, the VSC will refer him or her to
40 the assigned supervisor and ongoing supervision and evaluation of the volunteer will be the

responsibility of that supervisor. The volunteer's job description will serve as the basis for specific supervision and evaluation.

b. The supervisor will be responsible to assign tasks, provide supportive supervision, and evaluate performance.

c. The supervisor is responsible for regular evaluation (whether written or verbal) of the volunteer.

13. Data Collection

a. Volunteer services data to be collected and recorded by the VSC on an ongoing basis include, but are not limited to, number of volunteers, hours of services, and type of service. Such data shall be maintained in a statewide database and must be submitted at least monthly.

TRAINING

a. The Restorative and Community Justice Executive is responsible for ensuring the creation and implementation of the training section of this directive. In addition, the Restorative and Community Justice Executive may also choose to expand and create new trainings as necessary to implement and maintain the requirements in this directive.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

a. Quality assurance will be conducted annually by the Restorative Systems Administrator and/or Department of Corrections Audits as written in DOC Administrative Directive #403.01.